

different warehouse locations. See Response to first Office Action at pages 11-12. Applicants believe that the use of the term "source" in place of "vendor" more distinctly claims what they regard as their invention.

Applicants also have clarified those claims that contain the "means for converting" element or the "converting" step. Those claims properly refer to converting the "data relating to an item and a different source". This was one of the elements that the Examiner determined was not taught or suggested by the prior art (see item 7 of second Office Action). Applicants believe that the new language more distinctly claims the invention where, for example, the identical selected matching item were to be ordered from a different source. The prior language, "corresponding item", could have been misunderstood. The amended language properly claims identical matching items from different sources, as well as a suitable replacement for the selected matching item.

As to independent claims 79, 84, 95, 108, 113, 119 and 124, Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's 102(b) rejection based on Dworkin. Nevertheless, without prejudice to Applicants arguing the rejection at a later time, Applicants have amended the claims to clearly overcome the prior art. Dworkin does not teach or suggest the ability to check availability of selected items. Applicants' system and method permits availability determination, enabling purchasers to make informed purchasing decisions, e.g., ordering from a source where the selected item is in inventory versus ordering from a source that would require a back order. As amended, Applicants believe these claims to be in condition for allowance.

REMAINING ISSUES RAISED IN THE SECOND OFFICE ACTION:

As to the trademark issues raised by the Examiner, Applicants have reviewed the application and believe that the trademarks have been used properly. Applicants would welcome any guidance from the Examiner if he does not agree.

Applicants submit herewith proposed corrections to the drawings (shown in red). If the corrections are acceptable, Applicants will submit the corrections with the formal drawings.

Applicant submit herewith replacement pages for Appendices I through X, with correct margins.

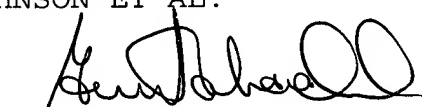
Applicants believe that the above claims are in condition for allowance. Applicants would welcome the opportunity to interview this case in order to facilitate early issuance of the allowed claims. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner's prompt and favorable consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHNSON ET AL.

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By


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